



## Providing Vision Care to Change the Lives of People Near and Far

It makes sense that many eyewear and eyecare companies ground their social purpose initiatives in the industries in which they work and are most familiar. To give back to vision-related charities is invaluable across the globe—and, for many of these companies, just makes perfect sense.

Through vision-based social purpose initiatives, the eyecare and eyewear industries are able to bring the gift of sight to people both locally and on a global level, and companies big and small do their part in equal measure—all for a greater vision.

One of the leaders in this effort is **VSP Eyes of Hope**, an organization fully funded by **VSP Global** which supports communities by providing access to eyecare, eyewear and disaster relief where it's needed most. Working with VSP network doctors, VSP Eyes of Hope initiatives have provided access to no-cost eyecare and eyewear for more than 2.5 million people in need.



In August, Eyes of Hope teamed with **GLAM4GOOD** to host in Paradise, Calif., a unique back-to-school experience for 300 students and teachers, many of whom lost everything in the Camp Fire that had swept through the community months earlier.

VSP Eyes of Hope and **GLAM4GOOD** worked with local volunteer VSP network doctors and community volunteers who were also affected by the Camp Fire to provide hundreds of students and teachers with free eye exams, glasses, new wardrobes, accessories and personal care essentials. In total,

more than \$1 million worth of goods and services were gifted by the two organizations, according to an announcement at the time.

VSP Eyes of Hope is supported by 8,500 VSP network doctors, who are annually involved with providing support and access to care to those in need. In addition, 119,000 community members affected by disaster have gained access to eyecare and replacement eyewear, VSP noted.

"VSP Eyes of Hope is core to our mission of helping people see," **Michael Guyette**, president and chief executive officer of VSP Global, said. "By partnering with VSP network doctors, we're able to bring access to no-cost eyecare and eyewear where it's needed most, including those disadvantaged by income, disaster or distance."

Also working to support schools and students this year was the **Essilor Vision Foundation**, which has now provided more than 1 million pairs of eyeglasses to individuals in need since its debut in 2007. In July 2019, Essilor Vision Foundation awarded the one-millionth pair of glasses to adorable first-grader Khloe, whom the foundation said represents the estimated 10 million children in the U.S. who can't see clearly and need vision care.

In recognition of hitting the one million mark, the Foundation launched its year-long "One Million Magic Moments" campaign, noting that "every time a child like Khloe receives a pair of eyeglasses, magic happens." Glasses provide magic moments throughout a child's life, from seeing the board in school and catching a ball to seeing a loved one's smile, the Foundation noted. This campaign celebrates these magic moments experienced by children across the U.S. who can proudly say "I am one in a million."

"Many people cannot imagine living in a world where everything is blurred, and may be surprised to learn that one in four children in the U.S. has a vision problem that's significant enough to affect their ability to learn," said **Becky Palm**, president and executive director of the Foundation. She also noted that the Foundation encourages eyecare pro-



fessionals, teachers, parents and their communities to become advocates for vision care to help millions more.

Among the other highlights of Essilor Vision Foundation's efforts this year was the work under the "Changing Life through Lenses" program, which provides free frames and lenses for patients in need when an OD donates an eye exam. As of late November, more than 2,000 ODs were enrolled in the program, serving patients with 125,000 pairs of glasses.

The year 2019 also was a milestone year for the **Alcon/Orbis International** partnership, which celebrated the 40th anniversary of the partnership during an Orbis eyecare program in Mandalay, Myanmar. "In addition to its longevity, this partnership is notable because of its scope," a spokeswoman told *Vision Monday*.

"We support Orbis with product donations (including equipment and consumables), monetary donations and volunteers. The Flying Eye Hospital has a surgical suite fully outfitted with Alcon equipment and Alcon biomedical technicians travel to Orbis programs to train participating eyecare professionals on our equipment. We also support Orbis' hands-on training programs, as well as content development for online learning courses," the spokeswoman added.

In 1979, Alcon and Orbis began partnering to help people in developing countries where blindness is widespread. Nearly 90 percent of the world's blind and visually impaired people live in low- and middle-income countries and have limited access

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to health care services.

Orbis is a non-governmental organization dedicated to saving sight worldwide by training eye professionals in underserved communities. Alcon biomedical engineers and technicians share their technical skills and knowledge to help Orbis partners operate and maintain equipment and local eyecare infrastructure.



In addition, the Alcon Foundation sponsors Orbis training programs in countries that include China, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Panama, Peru and Vietnam.

On the retail side of optical, the **Eyeglass World** unit of **National Vision** produced 48,000 pairs of eyeglasses annually as part of a new “Made Locally, Given Globally” program, which was piloted in 2019 and launched this year nationwide. Here’s how it works: When a customer makes an eyeglass purchase at Eyeglass World, the retailer handcrafts a pair of eyeglasses in its in-store lab in a prescription that is most needed around the world. These custom-made glasses are then donated to those in need in countries around the world.

The program is run in partnership with 20/20 Quest, a National Vision sponsored charitable foundation. The eyeglasses are distributed to people in need around the globe via partners at RestoringVision, according to a spokeswoman.

National Vision also is active in the U.S. with local community outreach, including an Atlanta school event with its **America’s Best Contacts & Eyeglasses** business segment. And as part of its #Giving Tuesday support, America’s Best stores reach out in their local communities to help kids in need during the holiday

season. Each store has been given vouchers to use in local, community outreach with local schools, social workers and school nurses, among others.

National Vision also is a key supporter of Boys & Girls Clubs of America. “We think of ourselves as a fast-growing business engine that, in turn, also fuels a fast-growing philanthropic mission,” chief executive officer **Reade Fahs** said. “We partner with organizations like the Boys & Girls Clubs of America and a number of schools to bring exams and glasses to lower-income children in America, and we partner with VisionSpring and RestoringVision to address the problem of the lack of affordable glasses in low income communities throughout the world.”

2019 also was a busy year for independent non-profit **OneSight**, which counts new clinic locations, the completion and transfer of a permanent, self-sustaining vision care infrastructure and its first public art installation as some of the year’s highlights.

In May, OneSight and National Geographic hosted a global vision care panel that brought together several thought-leaders to consider topics such as defining lack of access, explaining the impact of clear sight, the implications of technology, and the role of public-private partnerships. In addition, Pulitzer Prize winning and National Geographic photographer, Stephanie Sinclair, chronicled and showcased her favorite images from a OneSight expedition through the Amazon and Rwanda.

“Looking back, 2019 has been a pivotal year for OneSight and the vision care cause,” **K-T Overbey**, president and executive director for OneSight, told *Vision Monday*. “Our MOU signing in The Gambia was more than a moment—it was the realization of years of work, a collaboration of local and global partners and a testament to our sustainable clinic model. Armed with the learnings from this successful pilot program, we’re planning to complete our second country in 2020 and scale the model to bring access to those in need around the world.”

She added, “As we’ve dedicated ourselves to permanent and equitable access through our sustainable programming, we’ve also addressed immediate need through our charitable clinics, focusing especially on displaced and migrant populations in Jordan, Thailand and Colombia.



**TOMS**, who made waves first as a one-for-one shoe company, extended the same practice to their eyewear in 2011. For each pair of frames purchased, Toms contributes toward full eye exams, sight-saving surgeries, prescription glasses or medical treatments for underserved populations. So far, a company spokesperson told *Vision Monday*, “TOMS’ eyewear sales have contributed to more than 780,000 sight restorations and established 37 sustainable vision centers.”

TOMS dedicates efforts to a variety of social purpose initiatives in addition to their one-for-one eyewear model. Recently, the company rolled out an End Gun Violence Together campaign, calling for an end to the gun violence epidemic in the U.S., and the company has provided over 722,000 weeks of safe water for those who lack access through their TOMS Roasting Co. coffee sales.

**141 Eyewear** also employs the one-for-one model, giving a new pair of glasses to a person in need for each 141 pair purchased. 141 donates the same glasses they sell, and many of 141’s donated frames go to the Seattle/King County Clinic—an event at the Seattle Center which brings together a variety of health care organizations, civic agencies, non-profits, volunteers, and businesses for a four-day free health clinic.

A company spokesperson told *Vision Monday* that 141 has donated 1,500 frames to the Seattle/King County Clinic each year for the past four years.

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The spokesperson explained that opticians who receive their donations are often “thrilled to have 141 donate so many frames since the quality and style of our frames work so much better for their patients than the second-hand and old/discontinued product they were used to receiving.”

Photo by: Auston James



In addition, many of 141's accounts use 141 frames as part of their own community outreach programs. A company spokesperson explained, “I think they appreciate that we are giving the same frame they are selling off their own boards—so they know they can give away a good quality product to folks in need within their very own community... At the end of the day, we all want to do well and we all want to improve our community.”

**Pearle Vision** also is active in the effort to provide eye exams to school children through its ABSee program, which was launched as a collaborative effort by Pearle Vision and nonprofit OneSight ear-

lier this fall. ABSee is on a mission to provide eye exams and glasses to children in neighborhoods across North America where Pearle Vision EyeCare Centers are located. ABSee provides no-cost access to eyecare and corrective eyewear to children. On World Sight Day, volunteers from Pearle Vision and OneSight worked together to provide eye exams and glasses to hundreds of students at Earle Brown Elementary School in Brooklyn Center, Minn., the first of 10 planned vision care clinics.

ABSee clinics already have been held in Las Vegas, Minneapolis and Chicago with life-changing results – hundreds of children in need went home with the glasses they needed the same day. One in four children has an undiagnosed vision issue, according to the American Optometric Association.

**SkyGen** International Foundation, the philanthropic arm of health care benefits technology company SkyGen USA, also works toward improving communities around the world, primarily in Tanzania. Since July 2018, SkyGen International has provided more than 100,000 Tanzanians with free vision tests and distributed more than 22,500 pairs of free prescription glasses.

Executive director **Lisa Sweeney**, who previously had been chief financial officer of SkyGen USA, said



the organization will continue to expand its reach to even more regions of the East African country in the coming years.

“We could not be more honored and humbled to make positive changes to people's lives through these vision services and glasses,” Sweeney said. “Being able to see can be the difference between being employed or unemployed, getting an education or not getting an education. By enabling people to see, we're able to make extremely impactful changes to individuals, their families and, ultimately, entire communities throughout Tanzania,” she said. ■

## How Optical Companies Are Working to Contribute to the ‘Greater Good of the World’

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rather than the exception. This special section highlights some of the optical companies taking the lead in these programs – from Alcon and Bausch + Lomb to Marcolin and Kering – and the ways in which the optical community has come together to work toward a greater good.

### A New View of the Corporation

The growing importance of corporate responsibility was further demonstrated in August, when the Business Roundtable issued an updated “Statement on the Purpose of a Corporation.” Since 1978, the Roundtable group has been issuing guidance on corporate governance, but typically

they have endorsed principles of shareholder primacy. However, with the August update, the CEO group outlined a modern standard for corporate responsibility, a standard that commits companies to operate for the benefit of “all stakeholders,” including customers, employees, suppliers and communities—not just the shareholders.

Among the updates is a commitment to support the communities in which the companies operate. “We respect the people in our communities and protect the environment by embracing sustainable practices across our businesses,” the Roundtable's updated statement noted.

Johnson & Johnson chairman and chief executive Alex Gorsky said he believes the organiza-

tion's new governance statement better reflects the way corporations should operate today. “It affirms the essential role corporations can play in improving our society when CEOs are truly committed to meeting the needs of all stakeholders.” (Gorsky chairs the Roundtable's corporate governance committee.)

This month, *Vision Monday* for its December issue has compiled a rundown of a few of the optical community's businesses that are demonstrating commitment and action toward social purpose. These programs are highlighted in the following pages and reflect the ways in which companies believe socially responsible actions may play a more important role in their future success. ■





## Optical Companies See Benefits of Working to 'Protect the Planet'

**S**ustainability is a word that's talked about often today, but in reality it's a complex concept that touches upon many aspects of daily living. Perhaps the most-often quoted definition of sustainability comes from the U.N. World Commission on Environment and Development: "Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

In addition, most agree that sustainable practices are those that support ecological, human, and economic health and vitality. "Sustainability presumes that resources are finite, and should be used conservatively and wisely with a view to long-term priorities and consequences of the ways in which resources are used," according to the UCLA Sustainability committee. Many companies in the optical industry follow this philosophy.

Among the companies at the forefront of this effort is **Bausch + Lomb**, which for the past few years has been collaborating with TerraCycle on a popular

B+L senior director, professional strategy, **Jill Saxon**, OD, said during a recent joint event with TerraCycle.

"Coupling the continued demand and growth of daily disposable lenses, and our continuous effort to become a more environmentally sustainable company, we recognized this opportunity and quickly sought a solution."

Saxon noted that early in the process of working with TerraCycle, B+L learned that contact lenses are part of what is considered a forgotten waste stream—items many people never thought about in terms of recyclability. "We also learned that, surprisingly, even though the material used to manufacture contact lenses, blister packs and top foils are recyclable, the materials don't end up being recycled if placed in standard municipality recycling bins due to their small size."

Another company that has incorporated recycling and environmental protection into its DNA is **SOLO Eyewear**. Each pair of SOLO sunglasses is constructed using repurposed bamboo or recycled plastic, which the company noted reduces the carbon footprint and prevents hundreds of pounds of virgin materials from being produced each year.

SOLO said it repurposes packing materials and defective sunglasses for parts in new production. In addition, SOLO donates 10 percent of profits to the funding of eye exams, eyeglasses and cataract surgeries, which it believes has led to restored vision for 13,000-plus people in need. SOLO has partnerships with Aravind Eye Care System and Restoring Vision, and has worked to improve vision for people in 32 countries to date.

Multi-national vision care companies such as **Johnson & Johnson Vision** also are active in the area of sustainability across an array of programs. J&J Vision said that, working with its employees and external partners, it has achieved a "strong record of protecting the planet" and is committed to further reducing its environmental impact.

J&J Vision is focusing on three specific areas in this effort: climate, waste reduction and protection of natural resources. "We have significantly

reduced our carbon footprint over the past 10 years by prioritizing energy efficiency in our production technology and harnessing renewable energy with wind turbines and solar power in the U.S. and the United Kingdom," the company said.

"By further reducing secondary packaging for our all of products, we have made significant headway in reducing the impact of shipping, distribution, energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions."

Today, 90 percent of J&J's raw materials are recycled, and it continues to explore better solutions to drive single-use plastic recycling and packaging material optimization. The company also created Earthwards, a program dedicated to designing more sustainable products and brainstorming innovative product improvements.



contact lens recycling program. "Before the ONE by ONE Recycling program, we would routinely hear from doctors and patients of the concern they had for the waste that contact lenses and their packaging created, particularly daily disposable lenses,"



One of the most intensive optical company efforts around the idea of sustainability are the programs undertaken by **CooperVision**, which is working diligently to increase its efforts around environmental initiatives in specific key areas—saving

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water, conserving energy, and reducing, reusing and recycling resources.

CooperVision's parent company, **CooperCompanies**, earlier this year announced its alignment with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It subsequently published a series of short videos relating to these sustainability programs. The company noted that it believes providing access to the videos, even in their short form, will resonate more meaningfully with eyecare professionals, partners and others around the world.

"Our support for the SDGs represents our long-term view of what it means to be a global medical device company in the world today," CooperCompanies president and chief executive **Albert White** said at the time. "Through our efforts to contribute to achievement of the SDGs, Cooper is helping to address the needs of the planet and of people around the world."

CooperVision also was recently recognized for a contact lens rebate donation program that permits consumers to designate a portion of their CL rebates as a donation to **Optometry Giving Sight** (OGS). In the past eight years, donations to the program has resulted in more than \$800,000 donated to OGS.

**CooperVision's Melissa Kiewe**, senior director of customer marketing, told *Vision Monday* she believes the rebate program and partnership with OGS dovetails nicely with CooperVision's own corporate responsibility efforts. "It's an actual fit with what CooperVision cares about and really gives the patients an option of 'paying forward' the improvement in how they see to help improve how other people see around the world. We're definitely very proud of [this program]."

**Costa** is a frame company which has long been committed to environmental causes, particularly water-related ones. In fact, the company calls protecting the watery world "one of Costa's main brand values."

In 2019, Costa kicked off their Kick Plastic Lens Recycling program at Vision Expo East, an effort that encourages ECPs to collect, recycle and repurpose plastic lenses, both clear and sun. At



Vision Expo West, Costa expanded the program, allowing optical labs to send both their plastic waste and dry plastic finishing, or swarf, to select Piedmont Plastics locations for recycling and repurposing. This is an expansion from two to 13 labs that accept optical discarded plastic in the continental U.S.

To date, Costa told *Vision Monday*, "the Kick Plastic Lens Recycling Program has facilitated the recycling and repurposing of over 2,200 pounds of discarded plastic lenses, with the number growing every day. This is in addition to over 22 tons (approximately 44,000 pounds) of plastic lenses processed from Costa's Daytona Beach labs."

In addition, Costa is dedicated to a Kick Plastic initiative to reduce the amount of single use plastic the company uses. As part of this program, the company has onboarded over 700 ECPs into the Kick Plastic Ambassador program: a commitment from the ECPs to ask their patients to be part of the movement, Kick Plastic Ambassadors receive a special designation on the Costa dealer locator website, as well as Kick Plastic water bottles for their staff and communication materials.

These initiatives are just the tip of the iceberg for

Costa. The company's vice president of marketing, **TJ McMeniman**, explained, "Sustainability initiatives are not just 'important' to Costa—they are an integral part of our DNA. That is why we are not only working to improve our own practices as a company but also believe firmly in using our resources to help others build out their own sustainability practices to protect our waterways."

**Thema Optical** is another company that has partnered with TerraCycle to further their sustainability efforts. Under the company's new recycling program, Thema is able to recycle the excess acetate created in their production methods. The acetate is then processed into sheets and used to make new acetate products.

**Giulia Valmassoi**, CEO of Thema Optical's North American division explained, "Thema is a global company that respects the importance of social re-



sponsibility. Vowing to be a sustainable company through our eco-friendly production process and recycling program was an easy decision when we knew the significant impact it would make."

For **Marcolin**, sustainability comes into play both on a corporate level and within their brand portfolio. Marcolin Group collaborates with Positive Luxury,

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which awards their Butterfly Mark, “a symbol of trust earned by brands that have adopted sustainability as a business strategy,” explained CEO **Masimo Renon**. In February, **Positive Luxury** will host their first-ever Positive Luxury Awards, with the Innovation of the Year award sponsored by Marcolin Group.

On the brand level, **Marcolin USA’s Timberland** is particularly dedicated to sustainable initiatives. Timberland in particular, Marcolin USA CEO **Davide Rettore** said, “aims to be the largest, most sustainable outdoor lifestyle brand on the planet.” The brand’s Earthkeepers collection frames are made with bio-based plastic obtained from the bean seeds of a castor plant, and the accompanying cases are comprised of 70 percent recycled material, Rettore explained.

In addition, Marcolin’s suppliers and factory supply chains are audited routinely to ensure they meet guidelines to reduce environmental hazards for both the employees and the local community.

In addition, Rettore said, Marcolin USA partners with Timberland internally for in-office initiatives including “recycling, plastic bottle elimination in the cafeteria, community service and cleaning, and seminars for the employees to raise awareness, with the final objective to be guided by a higher purpose.”



Much of the sustainability work at **Modo** is channeled through their brand **Eco**, which produces eyewear made of 95 percent recycled or bio-based materials. In addition, Modo plants a tree



with D.C. based nonprofit, **Trees for the Future**, for every Eco frame sold. To date, Modo said, they’ve planted more than 2 million trees.

Modo describes the Eco One Frame—One Tree program as an answer to the question, “how to do good with our eyewear?” A spokesperson for the brand explained, “Planting one tree for every frame sold seemed to be the best way to connect our social mission to the brand core message. To make this happen, we started our partnership with the NGO **Trees for the Future**. Since then we planted more than 2 million trees—and that number just keeps growing.”

This year, Modo has also worked to raise the volume on this initiative, after hearing feedback that they haven’t been “loud enough” in the past. Now, Modo offers marketing materials focused on their social purpose initiatives, which help ECPs tell their story.

Modo Global CEO **Alessandro Lanaro** told *Vision Monday*, “We have a responsibility to leave the world a better place than how we found it. Together with **Trees for the Future**, One Frame, One Tree is making a positive impact not only on the environment, but for the people”

Silhouette’s **neubau** also aims to set “high environmental standards,” a company spokesperson told *Vision Monday*. The brand’s motto, SEE & DO

GOOD, encapsulates these efforts, and so do the company’s sustainable practices, which include “the conscious use of resources,” regional production in Austria, and support of “nonprofit projects revitalizing nature in urban environments.”

**neubau eyewear** is constructed of naturalPX, an eco-friendly material made from organically sourced and renewable primary products (mostly oil extracted from the seeds of castor oil plants) and **neubau** aims for sustainability in their packaging, printed and in-store materials as well.

A company spokesperson explained, “We strive to treat our environment with the utmost consideration, knowing that there are already many accomplishments to look back on—but even more that lie ahead. It is our continuous effort to improve and our ambitious goals that define us.”

Sustainable eyewear is also at the core of what **Proof Eyewear**, an Idaho based company founded in 2011, does. All Proof frames are created using eco-friendly materials, including sustain-



ably sourced wood, biodegradable cotton-based acetate, and recycled aluminum. In addition, \$10 of each frame purchase goes directly to the company’s Do Good Program, which gives back to

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various local and global projects.

March 2020 will mark Proof's ninth annual Do Good project—right now, Proof customers can go online to vote between Morocco, Samoa, and Cambodia. Once a country is chosen, Proof will partner with HELP International and Art of Visuals to develop a project that will allow them to support and give back to people in need.

A company spokesperson explained, "We dedicate ourselves to creating sustainable change related to economic development, environmental conservation, education, and visual health. Working together with the people of the country we have chosen, the projects are designed to help to co-create change and empower the people... Just like our glasses, our Do Good projects are not one-size-fits-all, our efforts specifically catered to the needs of individuals and communities of each country."

Flint, Michigan-based **Genusee** makes their eyewear from recycled single-use plastic water bottles. Genusee is focused on effecting change

in three main ways, a company spokesperson told *Vision Monday*. These are: reducing plastic waste, creating living-wage jobs, and establishing a new circular economy for the future of Flint. As part of that commitment, Genusee designed a buy-back program through which the company buys back used eyewear for a credit toward the customers' next pair of glasses.

Within the luxury sector, **Kering Group**, including **Kering Eyewear**, have also shown a dedication toward building a more sustainable future. This year, Kering's chairman and CEO François-Henri Pinault was one of the 32 original signatories of The Fashion Pact, a movement led by French president Emmanuel Macron to align the fashion industry with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. The signatories will report on their progress in September 2020.

In addition, Kering was also part of the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services' (PPBES) first-ever private sector partnership. The partnership includes a "significant non-earmarked contribution to the

IPBES Trust Fund by Kering," Kering reported on its website.

And, at Shanghai Fashion Week, Kering held a "K Generation Talk & Award Ceremony" to recognize sustainable innovation in China. The ceremony was in partnership with Plug and Play, and recognized three Chinese startups, Melephant, Heyuan and Feilieu Technology "for their disruptive innovations addressing sustainability challenges in the textile value chain," said Kering on their website.

This is just a small sampling of Kering's sustainability initiatives—the brand's sustainability officer and head of international institutional affairs, Marie-Claire Daveu, heads up the company's commitment to sustainability, which has three pillars: care, collaborate, and create.

In 2019, Kering was ranked the second most sustainable company in the world across all sectors in the 2019 Corporate Knights Global 100 ranking. The company also runs the Kering Foundation, which aims to combat violence against women. ■

## What Does it Mean to Be a 'Just' Company?

**S**ocial purpose may be a large and unwieldy phrase, but it's not exactly vague. Rather, it's pretty straightforward to determine what does and doesn't count as a social purpose initiative, when it comes down to it. But things get a little more complicated when it comes to labeling a company or an initiative as "just" overall.

For the past five years, JUST Capital has surveyed nearly 100,000 Americans in an attempt to determine what they want from corporate America, and each year they rank the country's "most just" companies based on these results. As JUST wrote in their report, "Announcing the 2020 Rankings of America's Most JUST Companies," it's pretty clear what Americans want. JUST writes, "The response has been clear and consistent.

Americans want corporations to stop prioritizing shareholders and instead put workers, customers, communities, and the environment at the heart of just business practices."

Based on this response, JUST ranks each company by taking a look at a few categories: how it invests in its employees, how it treats its customers, how it supports its communities, how it reduces its environmental impact and how it delivers value to his shareholders.

So which companies do this best? And how do they do it?

Microsoft takes the top spot in 2020 for the second year in a row, this time with an overall score of 78.8 out of 100. They are first in the industry in the customer, community and shareholder catego-

ries, and second when it comes to workers and the environment. The top 10 for 2020 are: Microsoft, NVIDIA Corp, Apple, Intel, Salesforce, Alphabet, Anthem, PayPal, Procter & Gamble and VMware. Apple, Salesforce, Anthem, and PayPal are first-timers in the top 10 ranking.

But even smaller players can learn from JUST's 2020 rankings. It's encouraging to know that consumers value companies which give back and take initiative when it comes to doing good. And, many of the world's most powerful companies are powerful because consumers trust them—with their business, and with the mark they might leave on the world.

The full list of JUST's 2020 Overall Rankings is available online at [justcapital.com/rankings](https://justcapital.com/rankings) ■



# Humanitarian and Social Causes



## Optical Firms Support a Range of Community Programs That Define Goals of 'Social Purpose'

**M**any companies' social purpose campaigns can't fit into just one category. After all, there are countless causes that deserve championing—and the eyewear and eyecare industries have many of them covered. From animal welfare to Pride, there's no shortage of ways companies across the industry are giving back and doing their part to make a difference in our world.

In the summer of 2019, **Safilo's Polaroid Eyewear** sponsored and took part in NYC Pride (simultaneously U.S. WorldPride), and Stonewall 50, the celebration and recognition of the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Uprising. The sponsorship included a Polaroid float in the Pride March route, 400 "friends of the

conjunction with Pride, shot by Justin J Wee and featuring eight New York-based LGBTQIA+ influencers wearing Polaroid sunglasses in the colors of the rainbow. In addition, Lady Gaga performed at The Sonewall Inn during Pride, wearing a pair of Polaroid sunglasses.

This inclusive and progressive move is aligned with Polaroid's brand history. **Victoria Hallberg**, chief marketing officer, Safilo North America, explained, "Inclusivity is closely linked to Polaroid's brand DNA; its founder Edwin Land, inventor of polarized lenses was, in fact, among the first enlightened entrepreneurs to promote the development of women's careers in his company and to offer 'child care subsidies,' in addition to hiring female scientists since the 1940s.

In 1991, Polaroid created the first managerial development program designed exclusively for women, a path that led to the first woman on the board and to several leading positions at the top of the company. In the '80s, Polaroid was also the first company in the USA to have an assistance program for employees facing domestic violence."

Hallberg continued, "As an authentic and inclusive brand, Safilo was extremely proud to sponsor 2019 NYC Pride, the first WorldPride event to be hosted in the U.S., with our Polaroid Eyewear brand. We were very excited to take a corporate partnership in such a special year—one that commemorated the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Uprising—and support the LGBTQI community through meaningful activations. And, we were able to build a more relatable and relevant brand through the campaign on our social media platform."

In addition to the Pride campaign, Safilo, in 2018, committed to a three-year partnership with Special Olympics International, a continuation of a relationship that has been in place since 2003. The partnership includes an

annual donation of over 60,000 optical frames and sunglasses as part of the Special Olympics vision screening program, and Safilo employees taking part in the implementation of the Special Olympics-Lions Clubs International Opening Eyes events as volunteers.

**ClearVision** channels their social purpose initiatives through CVO Cares, an internal committee made up of volunteers from across the company. CVO Cares fields requests and ideas for social purpose campaigns from throughout the company, and coordinates activities.



In 2019, through CVO Cares, ClearVision has donated time or funds to a variety of organizations, including serving hot meals to over 250 people at the Family Service League shelter on Long Island, hosting a designer sunglasses sale to raise funds for Optometry Giving Sight on World Sight Day, volunteering at Habitat for Humanity's "Women's Build" event, hosting a school supplies drive for United Way of Long Island, and hosting "Socktober" in October, to collect socks for the Mary Brennan INN, a local homeless shelter.

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brand" (including Safilo employees) marching in Pride and a presence at Pride Island and the PrideFest.

Polaroid also debuted a new social media campaign and message, "See Beyond," in

Photo by: Getty Images

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ClearVision considers compassion to be one of the company's core values. A company spokesperson told *Vision Monday*, "Our family-run company was founded on a desire to make a meaningful impact on those around us. We want our customers to know that their purchases with our brand are making a positive difference throughout the year. At ClearVision, we authentically live our core values, and follow a guiding principal that we want to make a positive, meaningful impact on someone each day."

"Purpose, passion, style," is faith-based **Eyes of Faith's** tagline—purpose, a company spokesperson told *Vision Monday*, "it's part of our brand DNA—everything we do... is rooted in our purpose." Eyes of Faith engages in a variety of social purpose initiatives, including an ongoing partnership with Wichita Optometry that supports a mission trip to Uganda. Eyes of Faith also provides funds to Sight Ministries International to purchase 1,000 new frames and pairs of lenses or 12,000 new sunglasses or reading glasses each year, and the company provides new frames to free eye clinics, and the company's Wear & Share campaign to help fund Christian missions.

Most recently, Eyes of Faith partnered with radio host Delilah Renee to create an eyewear collection. Funds from the collection will be used to build homes for orphaned children at Point Hope Village, Ghana, a community created out of Delilah's Point Hope charity with the aim of bringing widowed women and orphaned children together in a safe, positive community with access to water, nutrition and education.

Eyes of Faith has found that these programs are important both for the people they help, and the customers and ECPs that Eyes of Faith works with. A company spokesperson for Eyes of Faith told *Vision Monday*, "Patients personally identify with the fact their purchase is do-



ing good in the world and the messages that are written right inside each temple.

"We actively promote our partners and purpose on our website and through social media outlets—this means opticals can learn about the specific causes our frames support, like homes being built at Delilah's Point Hope Village or people receiving glasses on mission trips. Patients love to know the real places and real people that their purchase supports."

In the Chicago area, **Rosin Eyecare** announced in August a partnership with Metropolitan Family Services that allocated a portion of the proceeds from an eye exam at any of the more than 45 Rosin locations to Metropolitan. The program ran between Sept. 1 and Oct. 19.

The program was designed to promote the

idea that eye exams are important for everyone, not just those who wear glasses or contacts. Metropolitan Family Services intends to use the proceeds to support its work to take care of mental health, financial health, and beyond for the children and families it serves in and around Chicago.

Offering assistance in California to firefighters battling the many forest fires this year, **Allergan** provided 15,000 bottles of its Refresh products to Los Angeles' fire department organizations to be distributed to the first responders fighting the California wildfires. The donation is part of Allergan's Refresh America program, which has donated more than \$4.2 million (approximately 290k units) to first responders across the U.S. since its launch in 2015, according to a spokeswoman.



Allergan launched the Refresh America campaign to help firefighters and other first responders alleviate their discomfort from dry eye during emergency situations. Every purchase of specially-marked packages in the Refresh product line lead to donations of similar eye drops to first responder groups nation-





wide. Allergan guaranteed a minimum product donation with an approximate retail value of \$250,000.

In a unique program, **Eschenbach Optik of America** partnered with the Fidelco Guide Dog Foundation, a nonprofit that works to match men and women who are blind and visually impaired with elite German Shepherd guide dogs. Called the Eschenbach Partner Project, the program is designed to increase independence and improve the lives of these vision-impaired individuals.

As a leading manufacturer of vision-enhancing products, Eschenbach's mission is to provide customers with the tools to improve their safety, productivity, independence and quality of life.



The Eschenbach Partner Project consists of a charitable commitment to sponsor the breeding, raising and training of guide dog **Magno**, who is now 14 months old and up to 74 pounds, according to Eschenbach's spokeswoman for the program. "He's been traveling a lot with his volunteer puppy raiser and even goes to work with her. He's been to local charity events, restaurants, a homecoming football game and has even flown on a plane to Las Vegas," the spokeswoman noted.

Next, Magno will train at the Fidelco kennel for six months and, if he passes all of the

assessments, he'll be placed with a visually impaired client in need.

**Paws N Claws** built its company around animal welfare, and gives a portion of its proceeds to animal charities and animal shelters. Its contributions to the ASPCA have totaled over \$60,000 since the brand was founded in 2011. Everything about Paws N Claws comes back to animal welfare—even their eyewear itself, branded as "Eyewear for Animal Lovers," features animal prints, paw prints and other design elements related to pets.

The company was founded by animal lovers Sam and **Phyllis Shapiro**. President **Sam Shapiro** said, "For us, it's a lifestyle—and not just a buzzword."

Previously, Paws N Claws has donated 5 percent of the purchase price of their eyewear, sunglasses and accessories to the ASPCA. Shapiro told *Vision Monday*, "currently, we are searching for a new charitable organization that benefits animals to donate to too."

In addition to these donations, the company also provides sunglasses and eyeglass cases to animal shelters and fundraising events across the nation, which the shelters and events can auction off to support their needs.

The company finds that customers are attracted to their brand specifically because of their mission. Vice president Phyllis Shapiro said, "People that are unable to support their love for animals in other ways are able to donate through purchasing a pair of Paws N Claws Eyewear frames or sunglasses. Our eyewear line is fashionable so customers don't have to sacrifice looking good for doing good. And isn't 'Wearing and Caring' what it's all about?"

Retailer **Eyemart Express** also is actively involved in special causes. In 2019, for the fourth consecutive year, the company organized a fundraiser for the Stand Up To Cancer (SU2C) program across all of its 200-plus stores. It pledged a \$10,000 minimum donation to the effort.



The company also will include customers in the philanthropic initiative, with a donation of \$5 for every pair of SU2C glasses purchased in stores nationwide through early September. "We are proud to continue our support for a deserving organization like Stand Up To Cancer," chief executive officer **Michael Bender** noted. "Our opticians and customers are passionate about this cause, and it is truly inspiring to see the amount we are able to raise for SU2C."

**ABB Optical Group** also has a program in place to support nonprofit organizations. The company recently awarded grants ranging from \$1,000 to \$5,000 to seven charities for outstanding programming and community impact. The grants were issued under the auspices of the Sixth Annual ABB Cares Program, and all of the grant-winners were nominated by eyecare professionals from across the nation.

Since the program's inception in 2014, ABB Optical Group has donated more than \$65,000 in grants to nonprofit organizations in the U.S. "ABB Cares brings the optical industry together to highlight noteworthy organizations that are making a difference in communities across the country," chief executive officer **Tom Burke** said. ■